

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 ARA-06 EA-07

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 OMB-01 ACDA-05

DLOS-04 SAL-01 OES-03 OFA-01 /115 W

----- 060174

R 091225Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5258

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

FOSIF ROTA

COMSIXTHFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 0547

CASABLANCA FOR REGIONAL FISHERIES ATTACHE

E.O. 11652: XGDS(1)

TAGS: PBOR EFIS PFOR MOPS MR SS

SUBJECT: SAHARA WATCH: COMMENTS BY 8TH REEON OFFICIALS

SUMMAYR: GOVERNOR OF MAURITANIA'S 8TH REGION, WHP H BORDERS

ON WADI DHEHAB, REPORTED AT END OF WEEK THAT MILITARY SITUA-

TION IN SAHARA REMAINS QUIELONGHE EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT

AT LIBYA'S SAHARA POLICY, IMPLIED 'AIN BEN TILI HAS BEEN

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ABANDONED AGAIN, AND DISMISSED RUMORS OF CERTAIN FOREIGN INVOLVE-

MENT IN SAHARA. DIRECTOR OF FISHERIES SAID HE EXPECTS SAHARAN POLICY OF FOREIGN NATIONS WILL AFFECT GIRM WILLINGNESS TO SIGN OR IMPLEMENT FISHING AGREEMENTS. HE ALSO SUGGESTED FINAL SAHARAN PARTITION LINE WILL BE NEAR CABO BOJADOR. END SUMMARY.

1. HAMADA OULD ZEINE, GOVERNOR OF 8TH REGION WITH HEADQUARTERS IN NOUADHIBOU, TOLD DCM, DATT, AND POL OFFICER MARCH 6 THAT MAURITANIA IS ON TOP OF MILITARY SITUATION IN ITS PORTION OF SAHARA. HE SAID ALL MAJOR TOWNS ARE FIRMLY UNDER MAURITANIAN CONTROL, SPECIFICALLY CITING DAKHLA, AUSERT, AARGUB, LA GUERRA, AND TICHLA. WHEN ASKED IF GUELTA ZEMUR IS SECURE, OULD ZEINE DODGED, NOTING THAT HE IS NOT FAMILIAR WITH SITUATION THERE. WHEN QUERIES ABOUT SITUATION IN 'AIN BEN TILI, GOVERNOR SPELLED OUT AT SOME LENGTH MILITARY INSIGNIFICANCE AND ISOLATION OF 'AIN BEN TILI. HE CONCLUDED WITHOUT SAYING WHO CONTROLS OUTPOST, BUT LEFT DISTINCT IMPRESSION GIRM HAS AGAIN BANDONED POSTION. (THIS DEVELOPMENT WAS EARLIER REPORTED IN NOUAKCHOTT 507).

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, GOVERNOR SAID HE IS NOT AWARE OF ANY CUBAN OR VIETNAMESE INVOLVEMENT INSIDE SAHARA. INTERESTINGLY, HE REFERRED TO NEW SAHRAWI DEMOCRATIC ARABA REPUBLIC (SDAR) AS A "COMMUNIST" REGIME, ALTHOUGH HE SUBSEQUENTLY USED TERM "SOCIALIST" WHEN REFERRING TO SDAR. OULD ZEINE WAS VAGUE WHEN QUESTIONED IF HE SEES ANY DISTINCTION BETWEEN TERMS "SOCIALIST" AND "COMMUNIST". WHEN ASKED IF WE CONSIDERS SDAR LEADERS LIKE BABA MISKE, BRAHIM DERWICH, WAND MOHAMED EL OUALI TO BE COMMUNISTS, HE AVERRED AS HOW NEITHER DERWICH NOR EL OUALI IS A COMMUNIST BUT ADDED MISKE IS FAR TO LEFT. COMMENT: REFERENCE TO SDAR REGIME AS COMMUNIST IS FIRST OCCASION OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE WHEN SENIOR GIRM OFFICIAL HAS SO DESCRIBED POLISARIO OR NEW GOVERNMENT# END COMMENT;.

3. DURING DISCUSSION ON SAHARA QUESTION, GOVERNOR WAS PUZZLED BY LIBYAN ROLE AND EXPRESSED INTEREST IN OUR CONFIDENTIAL

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UNDERSTANDING OF LIBYAN INVOLVEMENT. IN SPITE OF CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE TO CONTRARY, HE WAS RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT THAT LIBYA IS SOLIDLY IN POLISARIO CAMV. COMMENT: IN THIS REGARD, WE NOTE THAT GIRM MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS MOUKNASS AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR HUMAN RESOURCES OULD BOYE DEPARTED MARCH 5 FORGYRIPOLI WITH MESSAGE FROM OULD DADDAH TO QADHAFI. WE BELIEVE TWO MINISTERS WERE TRANSPORTED

TO AND FROM TRIPOLI IN LIBYAN MYSTERE WHICH HAS
BEEN SEEN AT NOUAKCHOTT AIRPORT. END COMMENT.

4. CHIEF OF NOUADHIBOU MARITIME DISTRICT, BRAHIM
DHERATT, CONFIRMED THAT MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA HAVE
OPUT STOPMTAALL FISHING OFF WESTERN SAHARA UNTIL RESO-
LUTION OF SEVERAL OUTSTANDING ISSUES. WHEN ASKED
WHERE MARITIME PARTITION LINE BETWEEN MOROCCO AND
MAURITANIA WILL BE DRAWN, DHERATT REPLIED IT IS NOT
ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN BUT IT WILL PROBABLY BE "JUYB A
LITTLE SOUTH OF CABO BOJADOR" (I.E. AT TWENTY-SIXTH PARALLEL).
IT WAS APPARENT THIS IS ONE OF PROBLEMS WHICH LED TO TERMINATION
OF FISHING OFF SAHARAN COAST. HE ADDED THAT HOLD HAD BEEN PLACED
ON FISHING OFF SAHARA BECAUSE MAURITANIANS DID "NOT HAVE
CONFIDENCE" IN SOME OF BOATS OPERATING OFFSHORE. IN
THIS REGARD, HE CITED ACTIVITIES OF SOVIET FISHING
VESSELS.

5. DHERATT NOTED THAT HE EXPECTS GIRM WILL ADOPT POLICY
VERY SOON OF LOOKING CAREFULLY AT A NATION'S SAHARAN
POLICY BEFORE SIGNING OR IMPLEMENTING A FISHING AGREE-
MENT. IF COUNTRY WHICH IS INTERESTED IN FISHING ACCORD
SUPPORTS POLISARIO, HE DOUBTED THAT SUCH COUNTRY WILL
BE SUCCESSFUL IN CONCLUDING SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS.
HE COMMENTED THAT SOVIET FISHING ACTIVITIES WILL BE
EVALUATED VF CAREFULLY IN THIS CONTEXT. AS EMB OFFICERS WERE
TALKING WITH DHERATT, REPRESENTATIVE FROM POLISH
ODRA DEEP SEA FISHING COMPANY WAS INTRODUCED TO HIM.
HE COMMENTED TERSELY AFTERWARDS THAT A POLISH COMPANY
IS NOT IN VERY GOOD BARGAINING POSITION THESE DAYS.HANDYSIDE

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